National Perspective on the Watershed-Based Approach

EPA Region 6 Tribal NPS Workshop
Tulsa, OK
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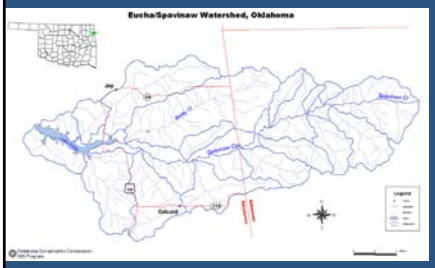
Beverly Ethridge, EPA Region 6

Watershed Approach



How Do We Restore Our Lands?

- American Indians have a distinctive cultural and spiritual connection to the land
- Many landscapes have been altered and often do not adequately support resources important to the tribes
- The **watershed approach** is a tool that can be used to heal and restore the bonds between the community and the land

When do BMPs go in?

Targeting Best Management Practices (BMPs)

- Until you have quantitative knowledge of:
  a) The nature and source of the WQ problem
  b) Your water-quality based goals
  c) The BMPs most effective at solving your impairments....

YOU'RE NOT READY TO IMPLEMENT BMPS

..... Unless you're lucky!

The Watershed Approach

- **NPS Program Priority**
- **Focus on the Watershed (rather than writing a plan for all Tribal land)...unless they are compatible**
- **Partnerships with Tribal Leaders, social groups, State agencies, USDA, other?**

- Define a specific geographic focus – may want to begin w/sub-basin...why? Most polluted? Easiest to restore? Greatest area of Tribal interest?

- What is the environmental objective and what data/science do you have? (or need)

IS THERE A POINT SOURCE PROBLEM????

Bit of History

- 1997: EPA was directed by the Clinton Administration to develop a Clean Water Action Plan
- In FY99 Congress authorized an additional $100K (i.e. incremental funding) to be used to implement Watershed Restoration Action Strategies (WRAS).
  - Unified Watershed Assessments (UWA) used to develop WRAS were found not to be very effective– 319 program was not demonstrating water quality improvements
- FY02 319 Supplemental Guidance: 9 elements of a WBP first introduced
- FY03 319 Guidelines (most current): States are required to have WBPs in place in areas where incremental funds are used to implement BMPs.

Clean Water Act Section 319(h) Grant Funds History

FY	Grant Total (in millions)
1990	$37.0
1991	$51.0
1992	$52.5
1993	$50.0
1994	$80.0
1995	$100.0
1996	$100.0
1997	$100.0
1998	$105.0
1999	$200.0
2000	$200.0
2001	$237.5
2002	$237.5
2003	$238.5
2004	$237.0
2005	$207.3
2006	$204.3
2007	$199.3

NINE Elements of Tribal Watershed-Based Plans (WBP) for NPS Program

a) Identification of causes and sources at the sub-category level that need to be controlled to achieve WQ goals
b) Description of the NPS management measures needed for implementation to achieve *water quality-based goals* and ID critical areas
c) An estimate of *water quality-based goals* expected to be achieved (quantitative or narrative)
d) Estimate of needed technical & financial resources

NINE Elements of Tribal watershed-based plans for NPS Program, cont.

e) Information/education component
f) Schedule (who does what, when?)
g) Description of measurable milestones for implementation
h) Criteria to determine whether *water quality-based goals* are being achieved over time (adaptive management component)
i) Monitoring component to evaluate effectiveness of implementation efforts

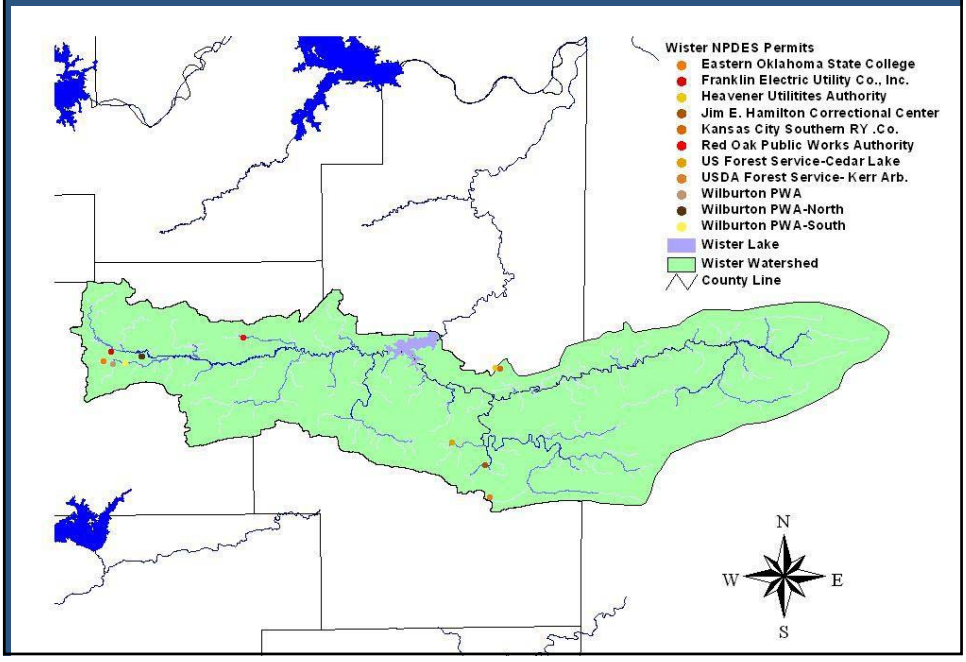
Reference: FY 2007 Tribal 319 Guidelines

Scale of Planning

- Tend to focus at the 10 or 12-digit HUC level

  Key: Ensure that the area is small enough to manage, but large enough to address water quality impairments and concerns of stakeholders

Lake Wister Watershed



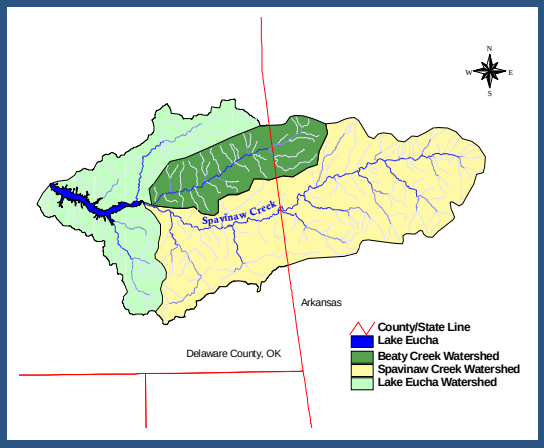
Relative size of Hydrologic Units

Level	Name	Average Size	Digits
1	Region	177,560 sq.mi.	2
2	Sub-region	16,800 sq.mi.	4
3	Basin	10,596 sq.mi.	6
4	Sub-basin	450,000 acres	8
5	Watershed	40,000 - 250,000 acres	10
6	Sub-watershed	10,000 - 40,000 acres	12
8-digit	Scale of old measures 2.2.1a & b		
12-digit	Scale of new measure W		

We are not tied to hydrologic units, nor a specific scale for Measure W!

SUBDIVIDE WATERSHEDS IF NECESSARY

Defining the watershed boundary



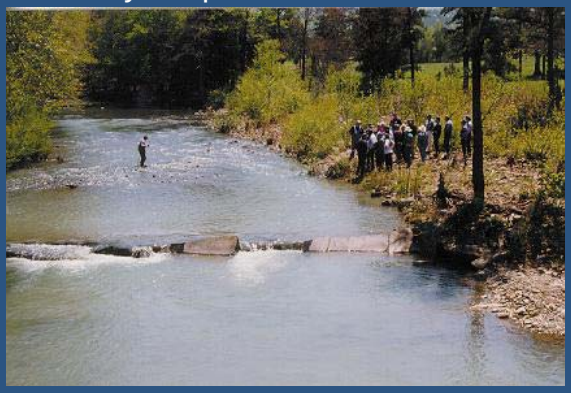
SOME URBAN LOW IMPACT SOLUTIONS

MESSY IS NOT ALWAYS BAD!!!

More urban LID examples

Monitor Progress & Check in with Partners

- Do you and your partners share the same WQ goal?



Invest in Partnerships

- o Identification of stakeholders
- o Increased public understanding
- o Look for Agencies who have a vested interest, e.g., USDA, Forest Service, OK
- o Access to technical expertise and resources
- o Leverage funding; be creative w/match

Collaborative Problem-Solving

Successful Collaboration Can:

- Address complex issues
- Leverage scarce resources
- Reduce conflict and litigation
- Promote innovation and integration

= significant, measurable watershed improvements!!

Collaborative Problem-Solving

- Potential Barriers:
  - Multiple ownerships w/in a watershed
  - Uncooperative partners
  - Lack of funding/resources
  - Staff turnover
  - Tribal–Non Tribal Overlapping Boundaries

Don't Re-invent the Wheel
to develop a Water-Based Plan (WBP)

- Reference your NPS A&M plan
- Review Existing Data – See what's missing
- Reference other relevant documents to develop plan (e.g. NEPA documents, state/watershed group WBPs, WQMPs, etc.)
- Various EPA watershed tools
- Consult with Region 6 EPA staff – will "certify" your WBP contains the minimum 9 elements
- Look online for model WBPs developed by other tribes, groups, states

Take Home Message: Talk to people and look for existing information!

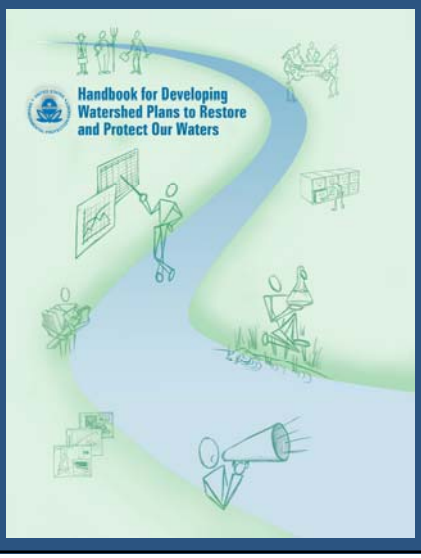
One More Thing...

- Tribes are not required to do WBPs
- HOWEVER, for competitive 319 grants, the Review Committee may give priority consideration to high quality workplans that develop and/or implement WBPs

One More Thing, part 2

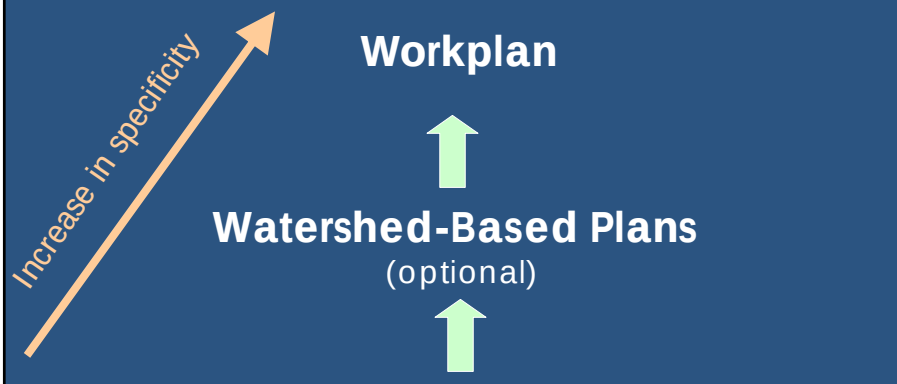
- Watershed-Based planning is probably the best tool we have right now to restore watersheds
- Ensures that every precious penny put into the ground is used effectively (mostly!)
- Gets people talking

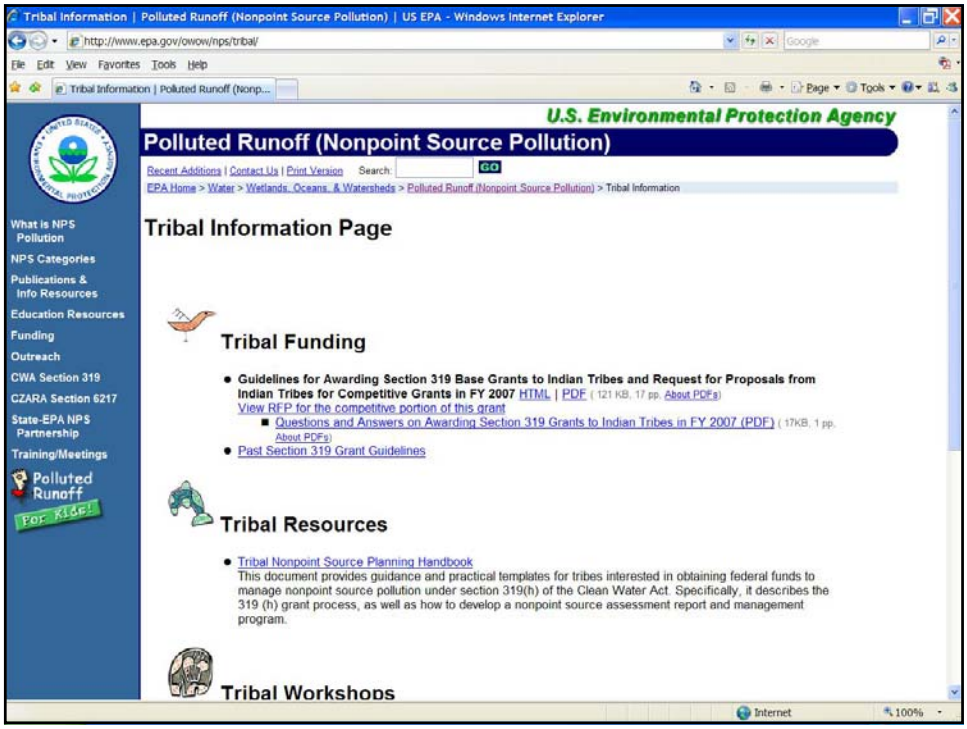
For Greater Detail on Developing WBPs...



http://www.epa.gov/nps/watershed_handbook/

What's The Difference?





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